

FRANKIE SUE DEL PAPA: AN ORAL HISTORY OF THE NEVADA WOMEN'S CONFERENCE

Interviewee: Frankie Sue Del Papa

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Description

The Nevada Women's Conference, which was held from June 17 to 19, 1977, at the Las Vegas Convention Center, was initiated by the National Commission on the Observance of International Women's Year at the request of the United States Congress and as a part of the United Nation's Decade for Women (1975-1985).

Some of the goals established for the conference by the Nevada State Coordinating Committee included: examining the role of women in Nevada's economical, social, cultural and political development; identifying barriers that prevent Nevada women from participating fully and equally in all aspects of state and national life; seeking consensus on means by which such barriers can be removed; and bringing women of Nevada closer together.

The women's suffrage movement in Nevada was a slow process and lasted from 1869 until women received the right to vote in Nevada in 1914. Nevada women came together as a group somewhere between 1895 and 1897 when a woman's suffrage convention was held to establish the Nevada Equal Suffrage Association.

The women's conference of 1977 was the first time women convened on non-political issues. Over thirteen hundred people attended the conference from all over Nevada. Close to three hundred people attended from northern Nevada. Not all participants were women, but women still held the majority. There were minorities, housewives, career women, high school girls, men and politicians participating in the conference.

Frankie Sue Del Papa was vice-coordinator for the Nevada Women's Conference. Born in 1949, she graduated from the University of Nevada, Reno, in 1971 with a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Political Science. Del Papa attended law school at George Washington University in Washington, D.C., and graduated in 1974.

While in her third year of law school, she began a campaign, with the help of Senator Bible and other prominent people, to prevent the destruction of an old home, dating back to pre-revolutionary times. The Capitol Hill home was (and is) the headquarters for the National Women's Movement. Del Papa has been active in the National Women's Party ever since.

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ROSELYN RICHARDSON-WEIR PRODUCED THIS ORAL HISTORY AS A STUDENT IN THE UNIVERSITY OF NEVADA, RENO, 1977 SUMMER SESSION COURSE, "ORAL HISTORY: METHOD AND TECHNIQUE." MS. WEIR IS A STUDENT IN JOURNALISM AT THE UNIVERSITY OF NEVADA, RENO.

An Oral History Conducted by Roselyn Richardson-Weir

University of Nevada Oral History Program

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University of Nevada Oral History Program
Mail Stop 0324
Reno, Nevada 89557
unohp@unr.edu
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PREFACE TO THE DIGITAL EDITION

Established in 1964, the University of Nevada Oral History Program (UNOHP) explores the remembered past through rigorous oral history interviewing, creating a record for present and future researchers. The program's collection of primary source oral histories is an important body of information about significant events, people, places, and activities in twentieth and twenty-first century Nevada and the West.

The UNOHP wishes to make the information in its oral histories accessible to a broad range of patrons. To achieve this goal, its transcripts must speak with an intelligible voice. However, no type font contains symbols for physical gestures and vocal modulations which are integral parts of verbal communication. When human speech is represented in print, stripped of these signals, the result can be a morass of seemingly tangled syntax and incomplete sentences—totally verbatim transcripts sometimes verge on incoherence. Therefore, this transcript has been lightly edited.

While taking great pains not to alter meaning in any way, the editor may have removed false starts, redundancies, and the “uhs,” “ahs,” and other noises with which speech is often liberally sprinkled; compressed some passages which, in unaltered form, misrepresent the chronicler's meaning; and relocated some material to place information in its intended context. Laughter is represented with [laughter] at the end of a sentence in which it occurs, and ellipses are used to indicate that a statement has been interrupted or is incomplete...or that there is a pause for dramatic effect.

As with all of our oral histories, while we can vouch for the authenticity of the interviews in the UNOHP collection, we advise readers to keep in mind that these are remembered pasts, and we do not claim that the recollections are entirely free of error. We can state, however, that the transcripts accurately reflect the oral history recordings on which they were based. Accordingly, each transcript should be approached with the

same prudence that the intelligent reader exercises when consulting government records, newspaper accounts, diaries, and other sources of historical information. All statements made here constitute the remembrance or opinions of the individuals who were interviewed, and not the opinions of the UNOHP.

In order to standardize the design of all UNOHP transcripts for the online database, most have been reformatted, a process that was completed in 2012. This document may therefore differ in appearance and pagination from earlier printed versions. Rather than compile entirely new indexes for each volume, the UNOHP has made each transcript fully searchable electronically. If a previous version of this volume existed, its original index has been appended to this document for reference only. A link to the entire catalog can be found online at <http://oralhistory.unr.edu/>.

For more information on the UNOHP or any of its publications, please contact the University of Nevada Oral History Program at Mail Stop 0324, University of Nevada, Reno, NV, 89557-0324 or by calling 775/784-6932.

Alicia Barber
Director, UNOHP
July 2012

INTRODUCTION

The Nevada Women's Conference which was held June 17-19, 1977 at the Las Vegas Convention Center was originally initiated by the National Commission on the Observance of International Women's Year at the request of the United States Congress and as part of the United Nation's Decade for Women (1975-1985).

Some of the goals established for the conference by the Nevada State Coordinating Committee included: examining the role of women in Nevada's economical, social, cultural and political development, to identify the barriers that prevent Nevada women from participating fully and equally in all aspects of state and national life, to seek consensus on means by which such barriers can be removed and to bring the women of the state of Nevada closer together.

Ms. Frankie Sue Del Papa, who kindly consented to do this oral history was vice-coordinator for the Nevada Women's Conference. She is an attorney in Reno, graduated from the University of Nevada-

Reno in 1971 with a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Political Science, and is currently a member of the American Association of University Women.

Ms. Del Papa attended law school at George Washington University in Washington D.C., where she graduated in June 1974. While in her third year of law school, Ms. Del Papa began a campaign and with the help of Senator Bible and other prominent people helped to prevent the destruction of an old home, dating back to pre-revolutionary times, on Capitol Hill which was (and is) the headquarters for the National Women's Movement. Ms. Del Papa has been active in the National Women's Party ever since.

Ms. Del Papa was first contacted regarding this oral history project June 14, 1977, a few days before the women's conference was held in Las Vegas. She graciously accepted to do the oral history and seemed pleased to know that the activities regarding the conference would be preserved. She also consented to donate all, her correspondence and papers relating to this women's conference to

the special collections department of the University of Nevada-Reno Library.

I had the opportunity of working with Ms. Del Papa helping to tie up last minute loose ends regarding the conference and was able to attend the conference where I took a number off pictures which I have attached to the papers that will be included with this oral history.

I have enjoyed working with Ms. Del Papa and found her very congenial throughout our two taping sessions. The first session was on June 24th at her law office on the eleventh floor of the First National Bank Building in downtown Reno and lasted about an hour and a half. Our second session was on July 6th and lasted approximately two hours in which we spent taping the final segment of the oral history and discussing if the women in our state would continue working together in public affairs and other areas of concern to women. Ms. Del Papa has a strong desire to see the women of Nevada upgrade themselves and get involved. The time and effort she put into the women's conference testifies of this desire and came through when we did this oral history.

The women's a suffrage movement in Nevada was a slow process and lasted from 1869 until women received the right to vote in Nevada in 1914. Women of the state of Nevada came together as a group somewhere between 1895 and 1897 when a woman's suffrage convention was held to establish the Nevada Equal Suffrage Association.

This was the first time women of our state banded together and the women's conference of 1977 was the first time they convened on non-political issues. Over 1300 people attended the conference from all over the state. Close to 300 people attended from the Northern Nevada area. Interesting enough not all participants were women, but they

still held the majority. There were minorities, housewives, career women, high-school girls, men and politicians participating in the conference and interested in the outcome.

Along with this oral history, thanks to the generosity of Ms. Del Papa, will be correspondence, programs, pictures, a tape of Ms. Gloria Steinham's speech, rules and regulations from the National IWY, selection procedures, news articles, pamphlets and miscellaneous papers pertaining to the Nevada Women's Conference.

Roselyn Richardson-Weir
Interviewer
July 13, 1977

FRANKIE SUE DEL PAPA: AN ORAL HISTORY OF THE NEVADA WOMEN'S CONFERENCE

In 1975 Public Law 94-167 passed Congress establishing state and territorial meetings and a national, conference on women. In January 1975 an Executive Order number 11832 was enacted establishing a National Commission on the Observance of International Women's Year 1975. These two federal actions together caused the existence of IWY and what became known as the IWY Commission.

The Women's Congressional Caucus in Congress, in my opinion, I believe was responsible for sponsoring the congressional legislation and for the handling of the legislation through Congress. A number of national women's organizations, I know, lobbied with the Executive Branch in order to get the Executive Order.

The United Nation's Decade for Women (1975-1985) was sponsored by the United Nations. I believe the United States was the sponsoring nation to propose that the decade be declared.

My first reaction when I heard that President Ford had signed the congressional

bill into law was one of appreciation and also the, anticipation that maybe something will come of having state conferences and having a national conference. You never can tell. But it was all a very hopeful reaction.

The commissioners that appointed the Nevada Steering Committee at the time we were appointed, the presiding officer of the commission was Elizabeth Athanasakos from Ft. Lauderdale, Florida. She is an attorney and a former municipal judge and she was the presiding officer.

The other members of the commission included Ethel Allen of Philadelphia, whose a physician and surgeon; Margaret Long Arnold, who is the assistant to the executive director of women's activities of the National Retired Teachers Associations; Bella Abzug, U.S. Representative from New York; Randy Ann Baca, an accountant; Elizabeth Carpenter, a former press secretary to Lady Bird Johnson; John Mack Carter, the editor-in-chief of Good Housekeeping Magazine; Nora Jiminex Cozano, business manager of a Caribbean business; Audrey Rowe Colom,

president of the National Women's Political Caucus; Harry T. Edwards of Harvard Law School; Casey Eike, who is assistant to the Dean of Women at the University of Kansas; Beverly Everett, Iowa State's president of the American Association of University Women; Mary Germany, election commissioner in Mississippi; Paula Gibson, a student at Spokane Falls Community College; Bojorquez Gjurich, whose the managing and principal partner of Robert Perada Construction Company of California; Martha Griffiths, who is a former member of Congress and is now a member of a law firm in Michigan; MingHe-Sue, who is director of international trade relations for R.C.A.; Lenore Hershey, editor-in-chief, Ladies Home Journal; Velma Murphy Hill, vice-president of the American Federation of Teachers, Patricia Hutar, who is the U.S. Representative to the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women.

The list goes on and on, there are you know, all total fifty commission members, somewhere in that neighborhood. The list does go on and on including Birch Bayh, Senator Percy, Congresswoman Heckler, Gerridee Wheeler—just a tremendous amount of people—Clare Soothe Luce; and ah, Jill Ruckelshaus a the names are familiar, interesting people.

This was the main commission. The way I understand it, there was a working committee in Washington that got together and took suggestions from the various states as far as having state coordinating committees appointed. They tried to get a broad representation of people and what I will do is attach hereto as an index to the oral history a sheet that is entitled "The Selection of the States Coordinating Committee" those people who are interested in learning about the selection process in detail can look at that.

The date of the appointments? We were appointed in late November or early December of 1976. What happened was—it was really interesting because I had read about this legislation being passed in Congress and written Senator Cannon to try and found out how to get appointed to it. I also called the IWY Commission in Washington D.C. because I was interested in being appointed. My name however, was left out of the list of appointees. Somehow I didn't get on the first mailing list and then one of the temporary co-chairs called me to tell me that, ask me if I was coming to the meeting. I said I didn't know that I was being included and she said yes, I was that there was a mix up and I somehow, because I had moved, I believe my mail got mixed up so I wasn't actually notified in writing of the first meeting.

But I did go to the first meeting which was held at the El Dorado Hotel, I believe it was a Monday. I remember it took all day and it was an interesting meeting. The first order on the agenda was to elect a coordinator and Jean Ford of Las Vegas was elected coordinator and then I was elected vice-coordinator. I was excited about it in that it was the first time that there had been any seed money involved in the planning of such a conference.

It looked like there was a good group of people. I was a little bit leery of having thirty-five people on a coordinating committee because my experience in the past has been when you get that many people it's difficult sometimes to move them all in one direction—and it was difficult in our case too! But it was a good group of people. We sat down and we discussed preliminarily where the conference should be held. There was some discussion as to tether it should be held in Tonopah or Las Vegas and the obvious place to hold it because of where the population is in our state was to be Las Vegas. We made a lot of decisions. We

knew we needed to get down to brass tacks as far as our budget was concerned and we made plans obviously for the other meetings we would hold..

We kind of tried to divide up the work as to who would be on what committee and to would do the planning, who would be responsible for the program, who would be responsible for outreach, to would be responsible for the festival and the cultural part of the program, to would be the fiscal officer, those type of decisions. We appointed an administrative assistant. Ah, you know, it was a beginning and obviously in the beginning none of the bad things had happened yet. None of the problems or conflicts had developed.

The response to my being elected vice-coordinator was obviously one of anticipation—eager anticipation, and looking forward to getting to know better the other members of the coordinating committee and looking forward to planning and hopefully a good conference.

In response as to who were the other members of the steering committee, I have already referred to Jean Ford, from Las Vegas who was the coordinator; Cynthia Cunningham was a member of the executive board, she was in charge of special projects, she's from Las Vegas; Christina Everhart was in charge of public relations; Renee Diamond was in charge of outreach, she's from Las Vegas; Josephine Gonzales was in charge of fiscal matters; Helen Myers was in charge of the arrangements for the conference. These names that I have just given you made up the executive committee of the members of the steering committee, and as most executive committees function, we had the primary duty of running things in the absent of the coordinating committee.

Our first administrative assistant was Fran Zorn of Las Vegas. She left us in mid-March

to take a job in Washington D.C. and she was replaced by Mary Forrester of Las Vegas. The other members of the coordinating committee are Cecilia Abrahams of Reno, Syble Askenette, Carson City; Tina Aguilera of Lovelock; Barbara Bennett from Reno; Myram Borders of Las Vegas; Nadine Dewitt from Reno; Julia Carlos from Reno; Kate Butler from Las Vegas; Marsha Doble; Ruby Duncan from North Las Vegas; DiAnn Echegary from Carson City; Clara Fells from Reno; Mary Frazzini from Reno; Charlotte Fry from Reno; Eula Lee Gelmstedt from Reno; State Senator Mary Gojack from Reno; Marilee Harper from Elko; Assemblywoman Karen Hayes from Las Vegas; Jan MacEachern from Boulder City; Maya Miller from Carson City; Jackie O'Meara from Reno; Adele Snooks from Reno; Mary Stevens from Yerington; Tommie Vance from Reno; Assemblywoman Sue Wagner from Reno and Lois Whitney from Elko.

Okay in describing each of these women—Jean Ford, I would describe as a former assemblywoman. Ah, unsuccessful candidate for state senator very-very active, long time active woman in Republican politics and in the League of Women Voters, social activist from Las Vegas, ah, interesting woman, mid-way Through this she switched parties and went to the Democrat party.

Myself, I would describe as a social activist from Reno, very active in Democratic politics, active in the Center for Religion of Life and University activities.

Cynthia Cunningham, I don't know her politics, ah, I know she was an unsuccessful candidate, I believe for either the school board or for the assembly.

Renee Diamond, active in Democratic politics, social activist from Las Vegas.

Christina Everhart, heavily involved in public relations, active in Democratic politics.

Josephine Gonzales, active in Democratic politics and minority interests. She is very active in the Latin organizations, ah, was a delegate to the National Democratic Convention in New York.

Helen Myers, I don't know what her politics are, she was—she is a very active business woman. She and her husband have a pretty successful business in Las Vegas. I know she's Jewish, ah a terrific organizer.

Cecilia Abrahams, ski, I would probably classify as non-partisan. I know Cecilia is pro-ERA and her big influence was the Soroptomist Club. She's very active in the Soroptomist.

Syble Askenette, I don't know anything about her and she did not actively participate on the steering committee.

Tina Aguilera, a minority member from Lovelock. She was there mainly to represent rural interests. I don't know what her politics are.

Barbara Bennett—active in Democratic politics, unsuccessful candidate for Reno City Council, ah, could be classified as a social activist.

Myram Borders, I don't know what her politics are, very-very successful. newspaperwoman in Las Vegas, very talented and contributed a great deal to ah, the steering committee.

Kate Butler, I know she is a Republican from Las Vegas. Ah, very active in ERA, the leader for The Nevadans for ERA, a doctor's wife.

Julia Carlos, I don't know what her politics are, I know she is very active in the Latin organizations in Northern Nevada. Nadine DeWitt is what I would say non-partisan. She is a minister now, an ordained minister, and she is co-leader of' the Center for Religion and Life, the ecumenical center here in Reno.

Marsha Doble, ah, I don't know what her politics are. I think she is active in Democratic politics, very liberal, outspoken young woman from Las Vegas.

Ruby Duncan is involved in Democratic politics not so much so you would classify her as a welfare rights. She is forever saying, she is the advocate, ahm, the out-spoken woman for the poor women and black women in the state.

DiAnn Echegary, not politically involved, she is active in the Indian movement in the rural areas.

Clara Fells, a black woman from Reno, very active in the civil rights movement.

Mary Frazzini, Republican, former assemblywoman from Reno, very active in women's issues and of late a very out-spoken leader in gaining rights for senior citizens. I think this woman has probably done more in Washoe County than anybody else, as far as the senior citizens are concerned.

Charlotte Fry, an Indian from Reno, I don't believe she is active in politics.

Eula Lee Gelmstedt, I don't know what her political persuasion is ah, older woman. Unfortunately her participation was curtailed by the death of her husband during the middle of this.

Mary Gojack, a democratic state senator from Reno, very active in women's affairs, pro-ERA.

Assemblywoman Karen Hayes, democrat from Las Vegas, anti-ERA. Ah, I would say she possibly could be classified as a conservative politician.

Marilee Harper, she didn't participate too much either. I know she is from Elko. I don't know anything about her political persuasion. She was not very active.

Jan MacEachern, interesting woman from Boulder City. Her husband is a retired Federal. Employee, ah, steady, cooperative, stable,

responsible woman. I don't know what her politics are.

Maya Miller, active in Democratic politics, former candidate for the U.S. Senate from Nevada.

Jackie O'Meara, I don't know what her politics are. Her primary concern—interest in this whole thing was child care. Ah, she ended up heading a workshop on child care, but she is very-very interested in low-income women, providing child care alternatives, that was her main focus on the steering committee.

Adele Snooks, an Indian woman from Reno, I don't know what her politics are, her interest was rural minorities.

Likewise, Mary Stevens from Yerington, Indian woman, interested in those things.

Tommie Vance, ah Black from Reno, active in Democratic politics, well ah, not too active, she works for the telephone company.

Assemblywoman Sue Wagner, Republican from Reno, women's activist.

Ah, Lois Whitney from Elko, she's an Indian and very interested in minorities and rural women's problems.

Okay, I think I have kind of given you a break down of the group. From Washoe County, let's see, I told you where everyone is from so, I think if people are interested, they can count them up.

As vice-coordinator, it's difficult to describe my duties. The biggest responsibility was being a member of the executive committee, because the executive committee did have a lot of important decisions. From the list you can well appreciate how expensive it was to bring the whole coordinating committee together to meet. So much of the work had to be done by the executive committee.

I was responsible for the program and as a result of that I helped to coordinate what we will discuss in detail later that finally ended up as the actual program for the conference.

Ah, the time I devoted. Gee, I devoted a lot of time to it. From November until now, I would say that I gave it one full day a week. When you figure that out because you figure the time it took away from my work during the week, evening time when it took away and weekend time. It would probably work out to be one full day or more. Especially toward the end, it got to be a little heavy, but I did put a lot of time into it.

We had our first meeting in December and as I said it was a full day meeting. We had another coordinating committee meeting in January, one in March, one in April, and one in May. Executive board meetings—we had one in February, one in April, and the rest of the time we communicated, if not on a daily basis, at least twice a week by phone. So that's about what the meeting schedule was.

The effects on me personally, well obviously from any experience like this, I think it's a learning experience and you grow. You become better able to deal with people and relate to people and hopefully understand their problems and have them understand your problems.

On the steering committee—it was interesting because there were women there from all walks of life and representing all view points. I thought ah, sometimes it was real interesting because at the very first meeting, The people from Las Vegas said, well we don't want this to turn into a North and South split, and we did work to prevent that. However, you can appreciate the problems one can encounter having a conference in Las Vegas and having people in Reno help plan it. Obviously there's going to be a natural conflict and we did have our conflicts and we fought about a lot of different things, but in the long run, I think it turned out pretty well. We're all still speaking to one another. In the long run I'd say we learned how to work well

together. I think that I got along pretty well with everyone on the steering committee and the coordinating committee. We all had our problems and we all had to say you are not listening to me sometimes. You know, ah, those types of problems. In the long run it all, I think, worked out for the best.

Okay, I gave you a little bit in introducing the executive committee, I gave a little bit of what their responsibilities were. The other steering committee members: We tried to have everyone on the steering committee play a role, an actual role in the conference itself and when we discuss the program, I will once again go over the roles the steering committee played in the actual conference. But in the final analysis there were only a few people who didn't participate and I think I have already indicated those to you.

A number of committees were formed and the committees that were formed kind of corresponded to the titles I gave you for the executive committee. There was obviously a special projects committee and that was responsible for the mailings that we sent out. The 10,000 brochures that we mailed out to women in the state. Outreach was also responsible for making a special effort to include low-income and minority women, who have never participated in anything like this before and that was pursuant to the federal rules and regulations. Part of the reason for having a conference like this was to include women to have never participated before.

There was a fiscal committee, there was an arrangements committee, and then there was my program committee. The program was obviously devoted to getting together the various aspects of the final program to be presented at the actual conference.

Step-by-step happening- it's interesting because you would have to take this in a

chronological order and there's so much to put down, it would take you almost a day to go over the step-by-step happenings. But you can appreciate trying to coordinate everything that was coming to us from Washington.

The procedures set down to hold our conference—We were governed by Federal rules and regulations and as I did with the selection process, I am going to give you to attach hereto a copy of the rules and regulations that are contained in title 45 Public Welfare Chapter 1 part 166 of the Federal Register and they are included in volume 45 number 59 which was published Monday, March 28, 1977.

Now the date alone should give you some indication as to the predicament this put us in. We met in December of '76 and we started to do some planning. These regulations didn't come out until March of '77, so here we are handed federal regulations we have to follow, sometime after, you know our preliminary plans had already began. So you can imagine the dilemma that sometimes these posed. But these were the procedures and they are too lengthy to discuss in detail. I am certain when we get into some of the other questions, I will refer back to these in part, but this is where the rules and regulations are.* It also tells the amount each state got in funding, the fiscal report, the requirements of the conference, ah, the scope of the expenditures, what we could and couldn't spend the money on, the designation of the coordinating committee is explained once again and then some rules and regulations for the coordinating committee and some possible topics for workshops which may be used. It goes on to talk about the agenda and reports back to the

*See papers in Special Collections Department at the University of Nevada-Reno Library.

commission that we are responsible for, any employees of the coordinating committee, any contributions, that we could do with our contributions. So I will put that here, that could be part of the appendix.

Washington was helpful with the workshops. Most of the topics we had workshops on, they gave us workshop handbooks that we tried to get to the workshop leaders. Since the workshops did play a major role in the conference, it was really particularly helpful to have this formal kind of document.

In addition Washington was responsible for their federal publication "To Form a More Perfect Union", which was the document of the IWY Commission.

It contains a lot of statistics, history of the women's movement, a history of how this whole thing came about and a lot of recommendations for future actions. Washington was also responsible for a very helpful document the "Legal Status of Nevada Homemakers", what their legal rights are. Washington was also forever sending us pamphlets. We have boxes of pamphlets on everything, from arts and humanities to problems of older women to teenage pregnancy, all kinds of pamphlets and federal publications.

The conference itself, I would say was well-organized as a result of the planning done by the coordinating committee, the steering committee and the administrative assistant. Much of the actual arrangements, well practically all of the physical arrangements had to be done out of Las Vegas. I can't really speak to that. They really did a terrific job in making the arrangements for the convention center. I remember at one of the executive committee meetings we had in Vegas, we took a tour of the facilities. We had considered a number of sites for the conference and

because of the workshop rooms available at the convention center, we decided it should be done there. It was the most convenient and practical place to have the conference.

As far as the names of the committee members, we will go over that when we go over the program. I am going to give you a program which will be part of the appendix. Most of the names of the committee members will be a part of that program.*

The titles of the workshops—early on in deciding how we were going to work the conference, we decided we would have workshops on topics of general interest for women. Some workshops we reserved for organizational skills, trying to enrich people's life, trying to make them better able to participate in community activities.

The Saturday morning workshops, the titles of the workshops were: Administration and Management, Communications and Public Relations, Creative Artists, Educational Services, Homemaking, Professional and Technical, Running Your Own Business, Secretarial and Clerical., Selling Products and Services, Skilled Crafts and Trades, and Social and Health Services. Now the titles, I believe, adequately describe the topic that was discussed in the workshops and as I indicated before these workshops related to the work women perform.

Saturday afternoon the workshops included: Assistance for Abused Women, Child Care Alternatives, Contemporary Women and Crime, Double Burden-Minority and Female, Health and Nutrition, Homebound-Handicapped, Legal Status of Women in Nevada, Marriage Enrichment, Money Matters, Rights and Benefits of

*See papers in Special Collections Department at the University of Nevada-Reno Library.

Older Women, Sexism in Education, Single Parenting, Single Forever, Strengthening Family Relationships, Teenage Sexuality, Where is the Woman's Movement Going, Women in Politics and Public Affairs, and Women Worldwide.

We'll discuss later on the resolutions that came out of the workshops. I don't have the actual critique of the conference back yet, but I personally didn't have the opportunity to participate in any of the workshops. I dropped by a couple, but I didn't participate in any. I heard criticism of some, but the most part the feelings, people came away with good feelings about the workshops, saying they were well-organized. The leadership was exceptional and they felt that they gained a great deal from it. Now there were some obviously that didn't get out of the workshops what they expected to get. But I think for the most part, it was a very favorable reaction to the workshops.

I neglected to give you the workshop titles for Sunday. Those titles: Assertiveness Training A-B-C, and the reason we had to have three sessions was because it was, there was an incredible number of women, out of the 1300 participants, an incredible amount signed up for assertiveness training, which was very interesting. Basic Organization Techniques, Effective Discussions, Finding and Using Community Resources, How to Raise Money, How to Conduct a Meeting, Interpersonal Communications, Lobbying Effectively, Mind and Body Working Together, Organizing Coalitions, Political Campaign Techniques and Working with the Media, those were our workshops related to personal growth and leadership skills.

Some of the more prominent panel members involved included: let's see names you would recognize—Jo Powell, she's a member of the Hospital Trustees in Reno; Patty Becker, young woman attorney out of

Carson, she's going to head up the Nevada Industrial Commission; Mary Frazzini, we've already discussed; Marilyn King, very active in the mental health field in Carson City; ah, Assemblywoman Nancy Gomes and Sue Wagner did a good workshop; Jill Derby, very active in, she's an authoress of some note and she did the workshop on Women World Wide. One of our goals in this conference was to have some emphasis on international development. One reason we had this workshop was to fulfill this goal. Dr. Joan Owen, who was one of the moderators of Assertiveness Training, fantastic woman from Las Vegas, clinical psychologist; Leola Armstrong of Las Vegas, a number of years she's been Secretary of the Senate and very prominently involved in Nevada politics; Sue Volek, works for the R.J. (Review Journal) I know she's some sort of press woman from Las Vegas, has an outstanding reputation. So you can see there were a number of women from all over the state who had pretty strong credentials.

The conference itself—anytime you manage to bring 1300 people together regardless of their politics or their political persuasions or political leanings, I think you have to say, getting that many people to come and participate in something has got to be declared a success.

The political activities involved, interesting. I believe it is unfortunate that Stop-ERA, Pro-Life people did not participate more in the actual conference. We had a number of people who came to register to vote and attempt to influence the delegation that Nevada would be sending to the National Conference in Houston, Texas. It was unfortunate because I recognized a number of those women and they are good decent people and I know they feel strongly about their cause. But it is unfortunate that many of

them didn't participate in the various aspects of the conference. It is interesting too, because the steering committee and the executive committee bent over backwards not to make ERA an issue. Several of the conferences were having workshops on the Equal Rights Amendment, we were not going to have—we did not even have a workshop on the ERA. We tried to leave the issue alone. The state is already divided on it and what we could do was cause more, just cause more division, so we thought.

It is interesting because, and I will discuss later on the whole nominating procedures, the Stop-ERA and Pro-Life people accomplished what the other conference members couldn't accomplish on their own, in that their active participation and their handing out of their .-great numbers of them registering at once—and handing out stop-ERA and pro-life literature forced the people, the other participants of the conference, it first scared them and then later forced them to kind of unite and resulted in caucuses from all over the state coming up with nominees for a single slate of people who could possibly serve as delegates to the National Conference. So the political activities that were happening I think ah, much of it was unfortunate. The Stop-ERA and Pro-Life, their activities had the result of forcing other people of coming together.

The other political activities, I disagree with the other criticisms that some press people has lodged against the conference, saying the conference was run by the Democrat leadership. I don't think that's true. I think that partisan politics did not play a role in the conference. The role was very-very minor. I think that you can see that from the coordinating committee people, all political persuasions were represented. I really don't believe that political persuasions played a role. I think the greater conflicts came sometimes

from North-South. Greater conflicts came sometimes when minorities would band together all on one issue. The minorities felt differently than the non-minority members of the coordinating committee on some issues. I really don't believe that Democratic-Republican politics was a major part of the coordinating committee.

The feedback from the conference, overall, the feedback has been very-very positive. People have congratulated us saying, you know, what a well-organized job we did. We had the benefit of seeing criticisms that have been laid on several other state conferences. We bent over backwards trying to alleviate the problems. Gerridee Wheeler, federal officer and member of the IWY National Commission, who attended every part of our conference said that per capita Nevada had the greatest representation of any state conference held to date and also said in her opinion that the Nevada Conference was the best organized one that she's seen. So I think overall that the feedback was positive. I think people came away from the conference with a very good feeling.

As vice-coordinator, I was responsible for the program of the actual Conference. The activities that were held other than the workshops included: A session on becoming a successful businesswoman, which was a seminar sponsored by the Nevada Economic Development Cooperation. There was an exhibit hall, a film festival, a health clinic, there were speeches the opening night on—I should say by—people who were discussing who we are and why we are here. These included the chairman of the board of commissioners, Thalia Dondero from Clark County; Harriet Trudel, who is special assistant to Governor O'Callaghan; Jan Tyler came from Utah, she's the coordinator for the Utah conference. Congressional

representatives were all represented by Their staff people and Gerridee Wheeler, who is the official federal representative from the National IWY.

There were films in addition to the national IWY film that was there. There were singing sessions, the Regional Ladies Chorus presented a really pleasant session Saturday morning. There was a speech by Madeline Mixer, who is in charge of the U.S. Women's Bureau, from the Department of Labor in San Francisco. A speech by Jessie Emmett, a realtor in Las Vegas, a speech by Gloria Steinham (editor of MS Magazine), a speech by Carol Burris, (head of Women's Lobby-Washington D.C.). The actual festival on Saturday afternoon, late Saturday afternoon, was really interesting in that there was a performing arts review, there were poetry readings, drama, gymnastics, belly dancing and many dance groups and that type of activity.

As far as the program, I think you will have attached hereto in the appendix a copy of the entire program and I think it will give you a very detailed description of the various events and some of the participants. It will also give the rules of procedures for the conference. It will tell you a little bit more about the Nevada Women of Distinction that we honored at the actual conference, it will tell you about the film festival, It will list the acknowledgements, special friends of the conference, the exhibitors, the organizations that helped co-sponsor the group, the task forces that helped with the putting together of the conference and it will explain in detail the nominating procedures and the official nominees of the nominating committee. The nominating committee. The nominating committee as indicated in the program was comprised of six people. Chaired by Lois Whitney, Myram Borders of Las Vegas was a

member; Ruby Duncan of North Las Vegas; Barbara Weinberg, Reno; Clara Fells; Reno; Billie Bates, Boulder City; and Tina Aguilera, Lovelock.

The election committee was chaired by Ida Mae Crockett and the election committee members were: Vera Lee Davis, Myram Borders, Mary Stevens, DiAnn Etchegary, and Ann Howard were the election committee members.

The balloting took place in a special room set aside for balloting. It was a pretty elaborate procedure. We had required a signature card from people who had registered at the conference. Your signature at the time you voted had to match the signature that you registered with. You had to present your white identification card which was then punched so no one could vote more than once. The nominees from the floor in addition to the official nominees were Mary Frazzini from Reno, Christina Everhart from Reno, Karen Hayes from Las Vegas, Lorraine Hall from North Las Vegas, Pate Bates from Carson City, Patty Jackson from Las Vegas, Jean Cooks from Las Vegas, Betty Jo Ness from Henderson, Sharon Peterson from Las Vegas, Florida McDonald from Las Vegas, Kathleen Schonmeyer from Las Vegas, Lucille Brown from Las Vegas, Pat Cellini from Las Vegas, Kathy Schiffman from Las Vegas, Ivy Sloan from North Las Vegas, Elida Hernandez from North Las Vegas, Vera L. Davis from Las Vegas, Adelene Bartlett from Las Vegas, Pat Little from North Las Vegas, Colleen Powell from Hawthorne, Ruth McGroarty from Las Vegas, Janine Hansen from Sparks, Genevieve Smith from Henderson, Tommie Vance from Reno, Sharon Robison from Logandale and Louise Parker from Ely. Vera Lee Davis declined to be nominated as she was a member of the elections committee.

The procedures for nominees from the floor was merely, included coming to a microphone and stating name and residence of the person to be nominated. After all the nominations from the floor had been received then as chair, since I was chairing that session, I instructed all nominees to come forward behind the stage and then walk across the stage give once again, introduce themselves to the group and give their names and their residence.

The actual number of people who voted for the delegates out of the 1300 participants, the number who voted was 918. Now on the run-off re-election that was held for the alternate tie, we had to hold another whole election to break the tie for the alternate position. Around 600 people voted in that election.

The results of the election: The actual delegates that were selected to attend the National Conference in Houston and as I read the delegates this was the order in which they were elected: Jo Gonzales of Reno received the highest number of votes, I believe, which was over 600. Jean Ford was second, Renee Diamond third, Frankie Sue Del Papa fourth, Sue Wagner and State Senator Mary Gojack from Reno fifth and sixth, Ruby Duncan of North Las Vegas seventh, Kate Butler of Las Vegas eighth, Lois Whitney of Elko ninth, Blaine Rose of Las Vegas tenth, Christina Everhart of Reno eleventh, and Jan MacEachern of Boulder City twelfth. Those were the actual delegates elected. As you can see six of the delegates come from the Southern Nevada area and six come from the Northern Nevada and rural county areas. Five are from the Reno area and one from Elko and six from the Las Vegas area or Clark County area.

There are eleven pages of resolutions that were actually adopted by the conference.

I am not going to read all the resolutions because a copy of this, of the minutes of this session, will be attached.* Some of the more important resolutions that were to come out—that did come out were: that a non-political task force be established to coordinate existing women's groups in the formation of women centers in the state. There was a great deal of concern over the rights and benefits of older women and one important resolution was that a state-wide non-profit home care service be increased in the state. The conference also advised that the Nevada Women's Conference encourage and improve state and federal statutes regarding credit opportunities to prohibit discrimination because of marital status, sex, race, creed, or social preference. There was a pretty important resolution concerning child care, in that tax reforms should be adopted to give direct tax deductions to employers or unions who support child care centers. The women and politics workshop offered a resolution that the women's conference urge broad based efforts to carry out the purpose of funding political campaigns for women and to seek women candidates of all ages.

There were workshops on the national core IWY resolutions and these included: arts and humanities, child care, credit, education, employment, equal rights amendment and the legal status of Nevada homemakers, mass media, rape and reproductive freedom. The two most volatile issues obviously were the equal rights amendment and the reproductive freedom resolutions. In the end, the session, I believe, overwhelmingly voted to support the equal rights amendment and then also

* See papers in Special Collections Department at the University of Nevada-Reno Library.

defeated the pro-life, what was the so-called pro-life resolution and in essence supported the reproductive freedom resolution. The other resolutions are listed pretty much in detail and also there are or will be given in the appendix and the amendments that were tried and either succeeded or failed to these various resolutions.

Regarding the program, I think that it was a pretty balanced program. Those people who had the most complaints were those people who were long time conference goers and were complaining that it was much of the same thing. I think we accomplished the goals given to us and that we succeeded in providing an interesting function, especially for those people who had never attended this type of activity before. The national conference is the next step. Preliminary, what will be coming out to every participant is a list of all the other participants, a summarization and a critique of the actual conference and information on the twelve delegates, how to get in contact with them in case anyone has anything they would like to say or contribute.

The actual national conference will be held at Houston, Texas, November 18th, 19th; and 20th. The Nevada's conference is also required to submit a complete report on the Nevada's conference. This will be fed into the ultimate national report. The national conference will deal with issues not only on a state basis but on a national basis. The national conference will be required to submit a final written report to President Carter and I think what we will see is a priority listing of the issues that are facing women in the country, and sort of a women's agenda of what needs to be accomplished in the next few years. This is all a prelude to what will be a second national conference that will be held sometime in the 1980's.

The results of The Nevada conference will be made to the general public in that a list of all the participants will be sent to every library and a summarization and the Nevada report will be sent to every library in the state.

It's interesting because I think it's too soon to comment on how this will benefit Nevada women. Obviously the benefits, there are many benefits, to Those people who actually attended the conference. I think especially the first time conference goers. I think that you will see, hopefully an increase awareness among all levels of women as to what they can accomplish and The roles they might possibly be able to play in this state. The conference itself, I think was representative of all women in this state. It was more representative of some than others. Career woman obviously, I think had a greater representation. Those are the people who will do greater things outside the home anyway. The group that was the least represented were the actual homemakers who do nothing else.

Unfortunately many of the Stop-ERA and Pro-Life people probably would fall into that category, but we didn't have the benefit of their participation at the actual conference and I think it's not only our loss but their loss too. Ah, as far as Houston, I don't know it's interesting, it's too soon to speculate as to what will happen. Many groups have tried to divide the nation. For instance the Missouri delegation is going strictly to stop ERA. I think it's unfortunate because there are a lot of really genuine issues that could be aired in a good heated exchange of ideas.

Hopefully what will come out of Houston, is a well-rounded well-discussed report something that President Carter can put some meaning on and some credibility on. I believe, ah, personally, obviously, I think you grow from any type of involvement and then you put as much time and as many months in

this project as all of us did on the coordinating committee, I think we would have to say yes; we all grew. We faced a lot of problems and I think we learned how to deal with those problems and I think we will walk away from this better informed individuals in a better position to do this again on a grander scale.

Before I go to Houston, I imagine, I will speak to several groups about and try and listen to several groups—listen to as many people as possible as to how they would want me to represent them in Houston. I hope to get around to as many people as possible. For instance, a group of us spoke last night (July 6) at a political party (Democrat) meeting. I'm certain the word will go out that we are all available at all times to listen to what people want us to take to Houston and afterwards I would hope that I could be in a position to somehow get the word back to those people who at least attended the conference.

As far as the question whether Nevada will ever hold another woman's conference, alt, I don't know tat the possibilities are for another statewide conference. I imagine somehow, someway it will be done, ah, it's at an obvious advantage to have seed money to hold a conference like this. In working you realize just how inadequate \$25,000 is. It takes a lot of money to put on a conference of this magnitude especially when you're trying to keep the cost down, the cost at a minimum, so those people who wouldn't ordinarily be able to attend can attend. I don't know I guess probably someone in the next five years will have the energy to put this together. Probably more realistically what you will see is a continuation of past regional forums. A number of regional forums have been held in the Washoe County area, Northern Nevada and rural areas, and in Clark County. I think, probably it would be more practical to attend these types

of regional conferences than a state-wide activity.

I haven't seen the over-all evaluation and critique of the conference. But in speaking with Jean Ford, the coordinator, she said that the conference, the people who attended and tuned in the questionnaire were ninety per cent positive and the people for the most part came away with good feelings and personal growth and also benefited from the various educational opportunities and cultural opportunities that were presented to them through the conference.

The means of women of the state to stay in communication with each other a that's difficult because, the most we can do at this point is try to make available to as many people as possible the list. Ah, who knows—It's expensive to mail, to say 1500 people, and when you include the number of performers and other people who maybe, perhaps, were not actually participants. I know the mail out that we are going to send out that will include the names and addresses of the delegation to Houston, a conference summary, and the other names of the participants, there are 1500 names on that mail-out list, so if, ah, the only means I see right now is going through the list and perhaps establishing some one person in every area or some people in every area that would be responsible for communicating with other people. It's expensive to communicate and sometimes you have to rely upon the news media, you obviously lose many people in the transaction. At least the list will be available as long as it is in date and as long as there is a bulk rate permit to mail, I think we will be in good shape to do at least some mailing.

In answer to the question, will women's centers be instituted throughout the state. The conference has brought the women of the state closer together. It takes a lot to move people. I don't know, there is the initiative.

There's been some rumblings in the past about trying to get something on in Washoe County. I think ultimately we will see women's centers instituted throughout the state. It is exciting to see so many people who have never participated before and especially the younger people, but in any event people of all ages. It's good because sometimes the same old people get stuck doing the work over and over again and it's exciting to think that there will be new blood. Because with new blood in any type of organization or ad-hoc group comes new ideas, new enthusiasm and new energy and that I think—those things are the ultimate and are the things that will ultimately bring us success, I should say.

In summary, the conference itself was a really good thing to happen a really good thing to happen, there were a lot of people there. Obviously you have your standard people there who complain about anything. My philosophy is you get out of something about what you put into it. A lot of people put a lot of time and energy and effort into this conference and those people walked away with more than those who put nothing or very little into it.

I think in whole, it was a good beginning for the-state of Nevada. It was a phenomenon we had not observed before and it will help train those people who participated in the activities to come after us. Maybe we will never see another woman's conference on a state-wide basis, but I think you will see many of the participants on an individual basis making a greater contribution to the state and nation as a result of having—of this (conference) having been held.

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